these mechanisms may be found in other economies in the world along the continuum of technological complexity.

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Political Authority and the Economy

Sahlins (1960, 408) writes that "In primitive economies, most production is geared to use of the producers or to discharge of kinship obligations, rather than exchange or gain...control of the means of production is decentralized, local, and familial...economic relations of coercion and exploitation and the corresponding social relations of dependence and mastery are not created in the system of production...in the absence of the incentive given by exchange of the product against a great quantity of goods on a market, there is a tendency to limit production to goods that can be directly utilized by the producers." These statements fit the Washo case and help to explain why the investment of political authority and the possession of wealth are not associated in Washo society.

The ability to produce economic goods, and personal generosity, were two of the most respected qualities in individuals. Men who had these qualities were often given a degree of political authority. That is, their advice was respected and followed. In the broad view, political authority was the result of conformance to a configuration of obligations: economic, religious, kinship, etc. [577]

Sociopolitical Groups and the Economy

Steward (1938, 257-262) presents a theory for the development of sociopolitical groups in the Basin-Plateau area. In his view these groups were conditioned by their varying ecological adjustments.

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"The subsistence habits required in each region determined the size, nature, and permanency of population aggregates. These, in turn, predetermined many, though not all, features of social structures and political controls. In some regions, as among Western Shoshoni, exigencies of existence permitted little variation in the general sociopolitical patterns. When, however, ecology allowed latitude in subsistence activities, noneconomic factors, such as warfare, festivals, ceremonies, etc., became determinants of the sociopolitical patterns."

"Among the Western Shoshoni and many of their Northern Paiute and Southern Paiute neighbors it was physically impossible for families either to remain in one place for any considerable time or for more than a few families to remain in permanent association. The outstanding sociopolitical units, [171]